

How to **SELECT PICTURES**

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SELECT PICTURES

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Acknowledgment is given to Marion Lepley Martinson, assistant professor of Home Economics, University of Missouri, for her advice in the preparation of this publication.

Wherever you live, whatever your income, you can own good pictures and you don't need to be an expert to select them. If a picture says something pleasant to you and inspires you it is one you can live with and enjoy.

Pictures and Your Family

Pictures in your home express the interests of you and your family. They are one of the final touches which make a house a home. They give beauty and character to each room and show the individuality of each family member.

All of us grow and change, not only physically but mentally. As we have new experiences, we change our minds about what we like. As a result our personalities develop. For this reason, we sometimes change our minds about choices and replace the things we own. Some of our pictures may be replaced. We select some pictures for temporary value only. Others, we will appreciate for a lifetime.

The Appeal of Pictures

Some pictures appeal to us because they tell a story or remind us of an experience. We like others because they have beautiful color and pattern. But whatever the appeal, they should stimulate our imagination if we are to enjoy them.

A good picture expresses the personality of the artist. It reflects him, as an individual, and the time in which he worked. It is not an attempt to duplicate the real. Rather it interprets what he sees beyond the real. His pictures show his imagination and individuality.

We respond differently to the works of different artists. Each should and does work according to his own style—his own way of feeling and seeing. We enjoy some styles and don't care for others. We wish to understand them all. But for our homes we choose those we like best.

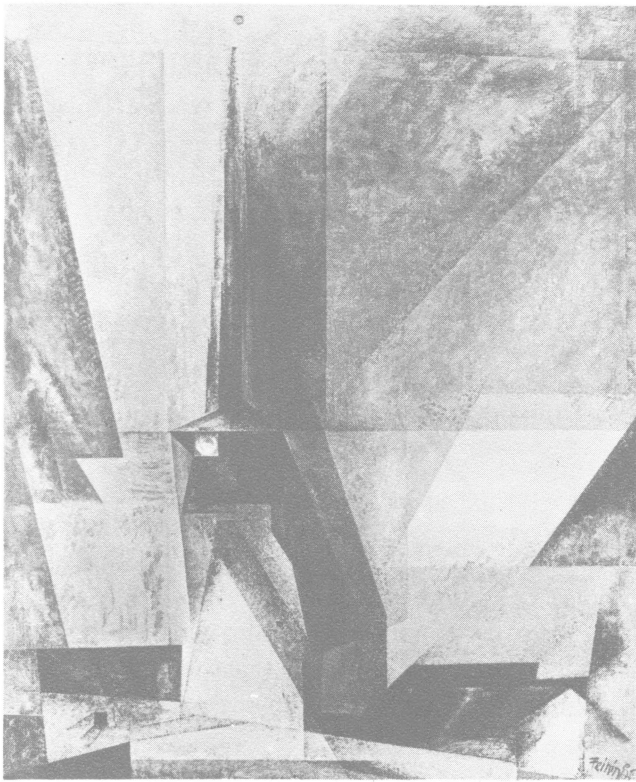


Fig. 1—Church at Gelmeroda—
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, George A. Hearn Fund, 1942

COMPOSITION

The composition or design of a picture is the arrangement of its shapes and colors. All of the parts fit together to make it complete. In the composition of a pleasing picture our eyes will follow easily from one part to another (Figs. 1 and 2).

Fig. 2—The Starry Night—
Acquired through the Lillie P. Bliss Bequest
Collection Museum of Modern Art, New York, N.Y.



PATTERN

Pattern is the distribution of light and dark areas and of plain and figured surfaces. Pattern makes the picture interesting (Fig. 3).



Fig. 3—The Milkmaid—
Courtesy of the publishers, (c) Donald Art Co., Inc., N.Y.
Collection of Mrs. Albert D. Lasker

COLOR

Color is probably enjoyed more than any other one quality in pictures. Quiet and restful colors or gay and stimulating ones have their own special appeal. The artist interprets colors, as he does forms. He does not try to duplicate what he actually sees.

INSPIRATION

Most pictures represent some idea or theme (Figs. 4 and 5). Subjects often enjoyed are scenery, "still lifes" such as flowers, animals, people, maps, architecture and historical incidents. Remember that when any of these subjects is good it expresses the way the artist felt about it. It does not necessarily duplicate the real object.

Some contemporary pictures show no direct relationship to what we really see. We say that these pictures are abstract (Fig. 6). The artist means to convey a feeling, idea, message, or mood.



Fig. 4—White Roses— Vincent van Gogh
 Courtesy of the publisher, (c) Donald Art Co., Inc., N.Y.
 Collection of Mrs. Albert D. Lasker

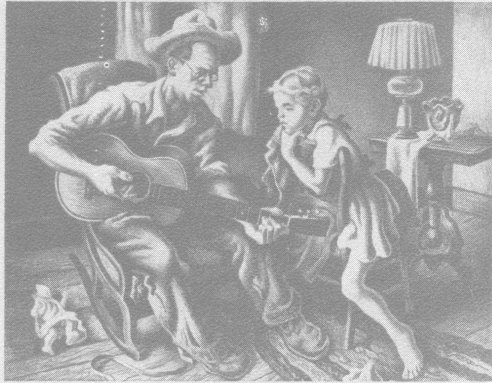


Fig. 5—The Music Lesson— Thomas Hart Benton
 Courtesy Associated American Artists, New York

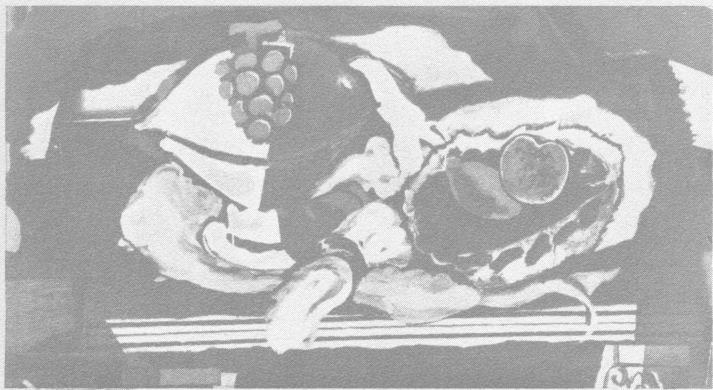


Fig. 6—Still Life—

Georges Braque

Fig. 7—Le Gourmet— Pablo Picasso
 Chester Dale Collection



Generally when we think about pictures for decoration we refer to graphics or paintings. Graphics include drawings, etchings, engravings, lithographs, woodcuts and silk screen prints. Paintings include oil, water color and casein.

A worthwhile picture has one or more of these qualities:

- Good composition
- Pleasing pattern
- Interesting color
- A well-interpreted idea

Pictures and Rooms

All the pictures in a room should seem to belong together. That is, they should be similar in color and feeling and seem to belong to the room and its furnishings. They should express the interests of those sharing the room.

In most rooms one picture ought to dominate. Use only a few. If you have several pictures, display some now and some another time for variety.

Living room selections may be those which both your family and friends will enjoy. Probably family photographs and other sentimental pictures will be better displayed in the more personal rooms of your home. However, photographs can sometimes be attractively displayed within one large frame. Or, you might put them in an album where they can be shown easily.

Pictures for children's rooms should be colorful without much detail (Fig. 7). Let children choose for themselves the pictures they find interesting. Offer them a varied assortment of good ones to select from. Their own art work may sometimes be temporarily displayed for the whole family to view.

Calendars are not considered good decoration. However, some calendar pictures are good enough to be framed (Fig. 8).

Fig. 8—A Snowy Morning—

Currier and Ives



In Place of Pictures

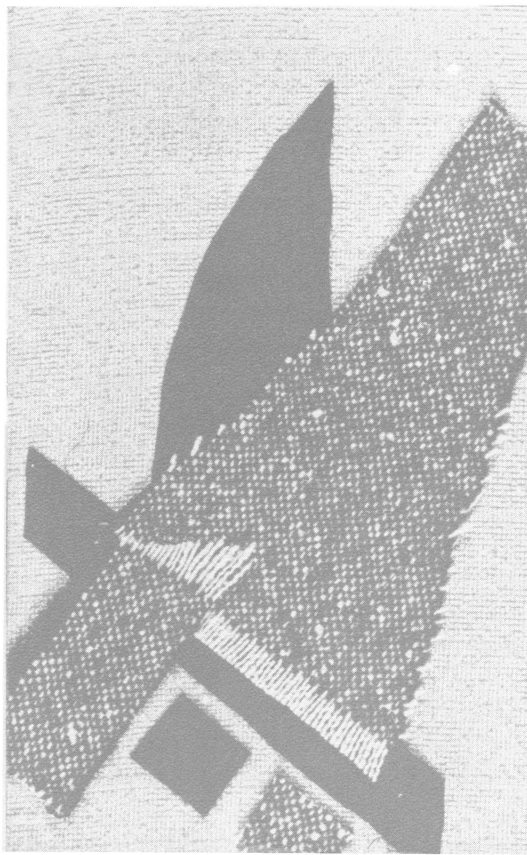
There are decorative textiles which you can purchase by the yard that make excellent wall hangings. They, like pictures, need good composition, texture or pattern, and color. Use a rod or pole at top and bottom to keep the hanging straight.

Your own designs may very well make good temporary or even permanent wall hangings. If you have a little talent and practice in creating designs you can arrange and frame interesting colors and textures for your room (Fig. 9).

A *mirror* is often used over a table in a living area. Mirrors can be used effectively in small rooms to create the illusion of more space. But it is well to visualize what you will see in the mirror before you hang it. In one sense it will be a picture.

Bulletin boards can be useful and decorative in kitchens, dens, children's rooms, or halls. You can change displays on them for variety. Interesting colors and personal items can make this arrangement unusual. A bulletin board is a good place for temporary display of family snapshots and photographs.

Fig. 9—Original composition



Where to Get Pictures

Originals and reproductions are available in both town and city:

- Art exhibits at fairs and other special events sometimes show good graphics or paintings. Their owners often want to sell them.
- Many decorator shops, paint stores, book stores, hobby shops and department stores stock excellent reproductions. Those with limited space may stock them only once or twice a year for a short time. Others stock them the year around.
- Museums sometimes sell reproductions of their famous paintings.

You can order prints from museums and art galleries. These will send you listings of prints:

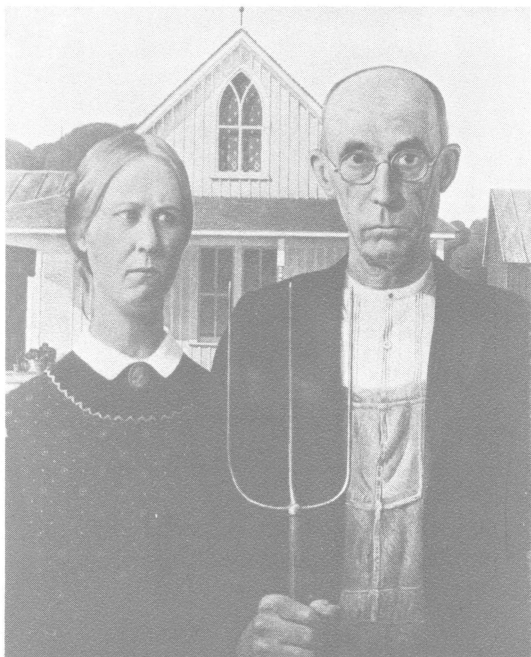
1. City Art Museum of St. Louis; St. Louis 5, Mo.
2. Art Institute of Chicago; Chicago, Ill.
3. National Gallery of Art; Washington, D. C.
4. The Metropolitan Museum of Art; New York 28, N. Y.
5. Museum of Modern Art; 11 W. 53rd St.; New York 19, N. Y.
6. The Minneapolis Institute of Arts; Minneapolis 4, Minn.
7. Artext Prints, Inc., Westport, Conn.
8. Nelson Gallery of Art, 4525 Oak Street, Kansas City, Mo.

Magazines sometimes print color reproductions which are good enough to be cut out and framed. The same is true of some pictures on calendars.

COST

Valuable originals painted by famous artists can cost thousands of dollars. However, many young artists do good work and are willing to sell their pictures at reasonable prices. These prices will vary according to the locality and the talent and experience of the artist.

Good reproductions cost from a few cents up. Average prices range from \$1.00 to \$12.00 or \$15.00 unframed. Reproductions of worthwhile pictures are far better than poor originals. However, they vary greatly in the quality of their color and pattern. The best reproductions show the brush strokes of the originals and follow the true colors exactly.

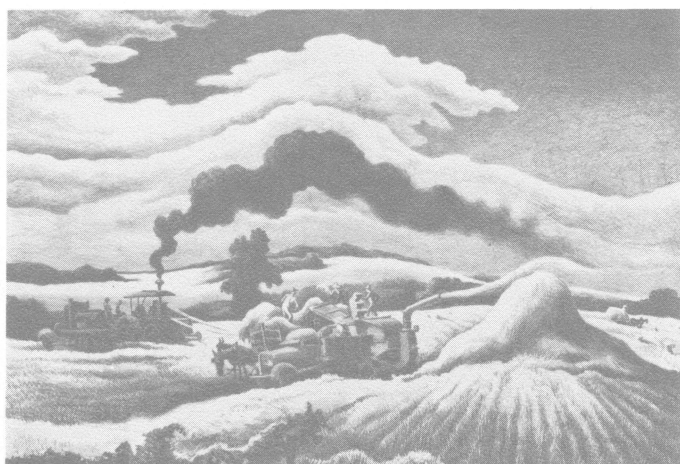


American Gothic—
Courtesy the Art Institute of Chicago Grant Wood



Mont Ste. Victoire—
Cone Collection, Baltimore Museum of Art Paul Cezanne

WORK OF WELL KNOWN ARTISTS

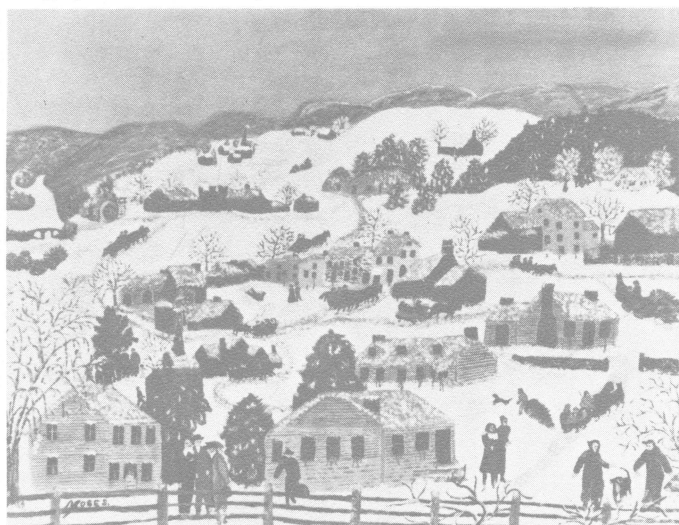


Threshing—
Courtesy Associated American Artists, New York Thomas Hart Benton



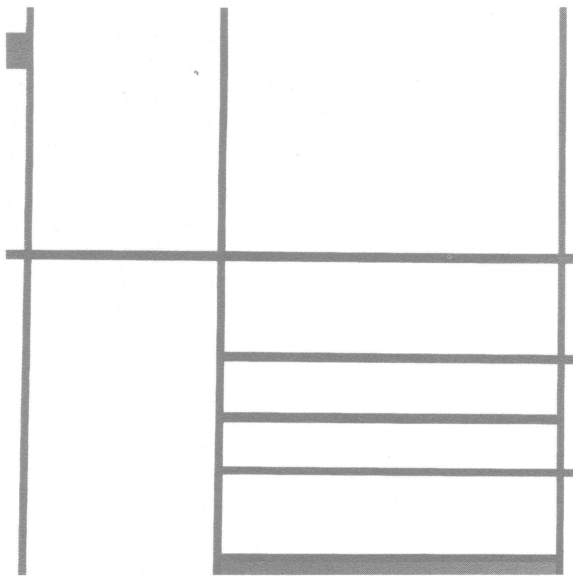
Lady Sewing—
Courtesy the Art Institute of Chicago A. Renoir

Winter Twilight—
Copyright Grandma Moses Properties, Inc., New York Grandma Moses



Yachts at Deauville—
Courtesy Arttext Prints, Inc., Westport, Conn. R. Dufy





Composition in White, Black and Red—
Collection of the Museum of Modern Art

Mondrian



Autumn—

Kunisada



Dancer With Bouquet— Edgar Degas
Louvre, Paris; Penn Prints, N.Y.



Winter in Paris—

Courtesy of the publishers, (c) Donald Art Co., Inc., N.Y.
Collection of Mrs. Albert D. Lasker

Maurice Utrillo

Tabac Royal—

Courtesy of the publishers, (c) Donald Art Co., Inc., N.Y.
Collection of Mrs. Albert D. Lasker

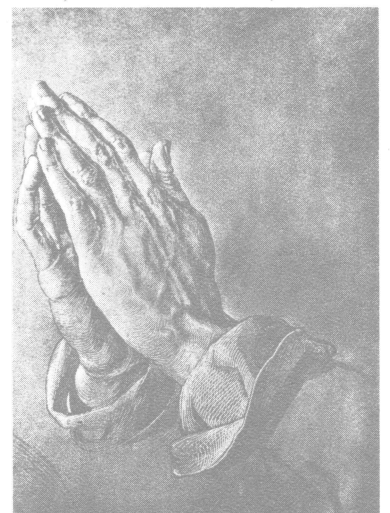
Henri Matisse



Praying Hands—

Courtesy Arttext Prints, Inc., Westport, Conn.

Albrecht Dürer



LOOK AT YOUR PICTURES

- Pictures should interest and inspire your family.
- They should seem to belong to their surroundings.
- *They should stimulate the imagination and bring enjoyment to your family.*
- Pictures should be removed, at least temporarily, if they cease to give the satisfaction which was intended.
- Children should be allowed to make some selections.
- Pictures of personal interest including family photographs are appropriate for personal rooms.
- Calendars should not be used for wall decoration.

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